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From: Maier, Brent
Sent: Wed 5/25/2016 9:12:21 PM
Subject: U.S. EPA Press Release: U.S. EPA and NIH Award \$5.1 Million for a New Environmental Research Center at the University of Arizona

Dear Colleagues:

The following press release is being issued today by the EPA Region IX press office. If you have questions or need any additional information, please give me a call.

Regards,

Brent Maier
Congressional Liaison
Telephone: 415.947.4256



For Immediate Release: May 25, 2016

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U.S. EPA and NIH Award \$5.1 Million for a New Environmental Research Center at the University of Arizona

A total of \$25.5 million was awarded to five universities nationwide

SAN FRANCISCO – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), announced \$5.1 million in funding to create a new research center at the University of Arizona (UA) in Tucson, Ariz. UA is among five universities selected nationwide to work with local communities to better understand ways to improve environmental conditions for vulnerable populations.

The University of Arizona will set up the “Center for Indigenous Environmental Health Research,” to work with American Indian/Alaska Native communities to examine chemical contamination of traditional foods, water, air, and household environments, while increasing environmental health literacy.

“Exposures to harmful contaminants in low-income communities is an ongoing problem in our country,” said Michael Slimak, director of EPA’s Sustainable and Healthy Communities Research Program. “With the support of these centers of excellence, EPA is working to address this issue and protect human health.”

Environmental health problems are more likely to occur in communities that have ongoing exposure to multiple sources of pollution. These communities are usually economically disadvantaged with limited access to quality healthcare.

Each university will establish a center of excellence on environmental health disparities research, which will conduct multidisciplinary research to mitigate and prevent health disparities driven by environmental causes. This research will focus on understanding the relationships between biological, chemical, environmental, genetic and epigenetic, and social factors.

The new centers, funded by five-year grants, are an expansion of a successful pilot program originally started by EPA and the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities. EPA's contribution to this research partnership will be \$7.5 million, with \$18 million from three institutes at the NIH (NIMHD, NIEHS, and NICHD).

In addition to UA, the following universities received funding:

- University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Calif., "Maternal and Developmental Risks from Environmental Social Stressors," for studying how environmental factors may contribute to childhood obesity and excessive weight gain during pregnancy in Hispanic and Latino communities.
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Boston University School of Public Health, Boston, Mass., "Disparities in Exposure and Health Effects of Multiple Environmental Stressors across the Life Course," for studying how housing may affect birth weight, childhood growth trajectories, and risk of death from cardiovascular disease, and whether improved urban housing may benefit health.
- Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md., "Comparing Urban and Rural Effects of Poverty on COPD," for comparing urban and rural effects of poverty on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and the impact of improved dietary intake on preventing or mitigating disease progression.
- University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center, Albuquerque, N.M., "Center for Native American Health Equity Research," for examining how contact with metal mixtures from abandoned mines affects rural Native American populations through exposures related to inadequate drinking water infrastructure, reliance on local foods, and other uses of local resources to maintain their traditional lifestyle and culture.

More information about these grants: <https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/currently->

funded-grantees-centers-excellence-environmental-health-disparities

Information about EPA's health research: <https://www.epa.gov/healthresearch>

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